

A

# REVIEW

## OF THE

# STATE

## OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Thursday, May 22. 1707.

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**I** Promis'd to enter a little into the other Parts of the Importation Bill with Respect to *Scotland*, that every impartial Reader may see, what it is *England*, for it was *England* when this was asking, suffers by a firm, nice and inviolable Adherence of the Union.

The granting a Drawback on foreign Goods imported into *England*, has been of old by Experience found proper for the Encouragement of Trade, and to prompt the sending great Quantities of the Growth of our own Colonies abroad, principally Sugar and Tobacco.

Before the Union, this Encouragement was allow'd on Goods exported to *Scotland*, as well as to any other foreign Country—And as it was principally Tobacco's that were so exported, the Duties drawn back were very considerable, every Pound Weight having 5*d.* at least allow'd to the Exporter.

Upon the Prospect of this Union, the Merchants pour their Tobacco's into *Scotland* at an unusual and incredible Rate from *Bristol*, *Liverpool*, *Whitehaven*, and *London*, and this so considerably, that I am told by a Merchant in *Dumfries*, that there have been 4000 Hogsheads brought from *England* into that Town only.

'Tis for the Sake of those People, who have not made themselves Masters of this Case, and for those Gentlemen, who living in the Country remote from these things, cannot so soon be informed, that I am thus particular; and those that know them more perfectly, will easily excuse me the being so plain in laying it down—The Design of exporting all this Tobacco is evident, not that *Scotland* wants, in a common Demand of Trade such a Quantity of Tobacco, or can consume it in any reasonable Time; but that

that there being a free Intercourse of Trade by the Treaty agreed on between the Kingdoms, the same Tobacco may be imported again into the *South of Britain*, where the Price will pay in the same Proportion as before; and so the QUEEN's Pocket is only pick'd of *5d. per Pound*, and they are where they were before; as to Oaths, Conscience of Frauds, breaking Bonds, cheating the QUEEN, and such Trifles as those, I shall not at all enquire into them here, any more than the Gentlemen concern'd have consulted them in the Design of this Branch of Commerce; *but this is the Matter of Fact.*

The long Repetition of this Historical Part of the Matter has this, *I hope reasonable Account* to be given it, *viz.* 1. To show the World, what just Reason the QUEEN and the Parliament had to bring in some Bill, if possible, to prevent so notorious a Fraud, which I think is nothing at all less than Theft in the highest Degree, being an open premeditated Robbery; and I see no Body pretends to defend it.

2. In thus showing the Necessity there was of finding out, if possible, some Remedy for so notorious an Evil, the generous Regard, both Her Majesty and the *H of P—s* had for the sacred Stipulations of the Union, will be still more conspicuous, I say generous, rather than just for this Reason.

It was not only just in punctually observing and religiously guarding the express Terms of the Articles; but it was a generous Regard to them, in that Her Majesty chose rather to drop an Act so abundantly needful, and see her Revenues expos'd to the intollerable Ravages of this *Raparee-Trade*, I have now mention'd; than so much as tread upon the Edges of the Treaty, than so much as give the least Shadow of Fear to her Subjects of the *North*, or Ground to their Enemies to suggest, that the Treaty of Union should ever suffer the least Invasion on their Part.

Abundance of pleasing Reflections might be made from this Observation.

1. How happy a Turn have these Nations felt in the Mannagement of the publick Affairs, and the Administration of the Government; that from a Time when all the Advantages possible were taken, and the

Laws strain'd to all Extremities against the People, both in their Freedoms and in their Purples; We are arriv'd to a Day, when the Government chooses to suffer Losses and Injuries almost unsufferable, rather than make Use even of that Power, which the Laws really have given them, or might give them, which would in the least seem grinding or oppressive.

2. How manifest a Difference there is to be seen between arbitrary tyrannical Princes, and free, just and limited Monarchies; the one opens the Veins of the Commonwealth, and bleeds the suffering Subjects on every Occasion, whether to gratifie Pride, Avarice, Ambition, or any baser Lust, and make themselves Judges of the Occasion; the other make the Good, the Ease, the Riches and Prosperity of their People, their Pleasure, their Study, and their supreme Design, and on all Occasions wave their just Advantages to give Way to this great End, the common Good.

3. Here the groundless Suggestions of these jealous People are expos'd, who have been so amused, and have amused their Neighbours with Fears and Apprehensions, of what Usage they should meet with in the *North*, when they had surrendred, as they vainly and absurdly call'd it, their Freedom and Independency. Here you see, Gentlemen, the Usage you are likely to meet with; you see the QUEEN and the *English Nobility*, to whom you fancy'd your selves intirely subjected, so careful of you, so tender of the Agreements made with you, that even without the Help of your 16 Lords, and before they come to have a Vote, every *English Nobleman*, that is a Friend to their own Country's Liberties, is a Guard to yours; nay, the just Concern for their own Laws, for the QUEEN's Advantage, for the punishing Exorbitances and Frauds, cannot prevail with them so much as to clash with your Interest, or make the least Stop that may seem hard to you.

Here you see the Commons of *England*, with whom you are incorporated, and of whom such frightful things have been said to you, how they would crush you, how they would oppress you; even these Commons, tho' as it were ruffled with Clamours, and worry'd



worry'd with Petitions of the Merchants, that like the Widdow in the Gospel, gave them no Rest; nay, tho' taken at all Advantages with the most specious Pretences for the Demand, and a visible Justice to Trade; taken at the End of a Session, with the thinnest House that ever sat on so material an Affair, being not above 80 Members; yet all this could not prevail to bring on the Bill about the Drawbacks and Importations, but with large and particular Exceptions for the Subjects of *Scotland*, which

as I said before, appear'd an absolute and unpassable Boundary to all their Actions.

I would fain have the Gentlemen, that have so often pretended to suspect the Integrity of their Neighbours, in making and in keeping the Treaty of the Union, reflect seriously upon these things, and certainly their own Consciences must smite them for having wrong'd their own Charity, and the Reputation of the best Government in the World; of which I shall not fail to take all Opportunities to remind them.

## MISCELLANEA.

I Broke off my Answer to a Letter in the last *Miscellanea* for Want of Room, wherein the Author offers to prove, that Bankrupts must have given in false Accounts to their Creditors, because they are seen soon after Discharge, opening their Shops again, and with great Stocks beginning a new Trade, whereas it is not visible how they came by those Stocks.

I think, this is rather a Suggestion than an Objection, and I am sorry to say, favours of a Want of Charity, or else looks like what I have often complain'd of, viz. A Willingness that the Bankrupt should as once unfortunate for ever remain so; but as I hope, the Gentleman, who sent me that Letter, has no such Principle, I do not make it a Charge on any, but such who make themselves guilty.

For a Bankrupt, who being once ruin'd, but deliver'd by the Law to endeavour, by falling again into Trade, to recover his Fortune, and find Bread for his Family, I think, is a natural Consequence of his former Circumstances, and the only true and honest Pretence that ever I heard made for the Act——For to what Purpose is he deliver'd? To beg, or starve, or fly his Country? these were none of the Ends of it; the Occasion was to set up again, to try again to build on the Foundation of old Experience, and if possible by new Industry, new Measures, new Helps, and new Success, retrieve the Shipwreck of their Fortunes.

As to the Funds they begin upon, for there lies the Objection, I know, there are

many who have Friends, who give or lend, or give Credit to a Man, when he is once got free, that would never set their Hand to help him out; and this may be the Case of many a Man, that having gotten the Liberty granted by this Act to begin to appear in the World again, and it would be very hard to conclude by these outward Appearances, that they have perjur'd themselves, only because we do not know where or from Fund they are furnish'd.

Now I shall propose a *Medium* for this too, tho' it be something hard upon the Person, yet I would have the Creditors of such a Bankrupt go to him, and ask him seriously from what Fund and by what Means he has obtain'd a Stock to begin again, since it was but so lately that he had been strip't naked upon Oath?——Now, tho' it may be hard, I say to a Man to discover, who are his Friends, who gives him Credit, and what Credit he has given him; and some of the Creditors may maliciously do him some Prejudice that Way;

Yet I cannot but think, any Bankrupt will frankly inform them; and unless he sees a plain Design against him in it, give a frank Discovery to them of his Affairs, so far as may clear up their Scruples on that Head, and clear up his own Reputation to them; in which Case it would be very barbarous for Creditors to make an ill Use of the Freedom, he uses on that Account, to prevent his having Credit, or lessen the Kindness of his Friends.

Now,